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Demon

S.P. | Occidental College '17

AUTHOR'S NOTES FOR DEMON

This poem is dedicated to all the men that are well meaning (including myself). I want the reader or listener to think about the raw power that we all house, that bleeds through men though often so involuntarily. No matter how we try or how well we “show up” for women, we are still praised a thousand fold our due for doing, at best, half as much—which is how we get our “Axe-man” status. We are not the executioners roaming about with blades trying to cut down women but we are the Edward Scissor Hands that try to create harmony, but in our shortcomings dice up the very women we seek to protect. As society praises us for doing what we can, we are collaterally robbing women of the deserved spotlight and our egos are again inflated (and our masculinity surrounded by a protective buffer of false-selflessness).

This is not our “fault” and it is better that we try and continue to improve our methods of lending aid but we have to be constantly aware of our co-opting abilities. It is so easy for us to do harm and to steal the “gems” of movements that are not about us. There are so many dangers to intersectional movements because there are so many people to be accounted for that it is crucial that men, regardless of race and sexuality, be aware of the powers we have.



Though something of a nonsequitur, I would like to briefly address the notions of time and timeliness early in the poem, which I had hoped to present as the ultimate threat to us all, but especially with regards to women and women’s issues. I recall Frederick Douglass when I say that “time” is always of the essence, when Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Stanton fought for women’s suffrage as Black men were fighting for the vote. I don’t want to put race and gender in conflict at the moment but point out that there is a constant war among marginalised groups and in this instance, Black women are still being disregarded splitting the women’s movement “at the neck” (where face/skin value affects impact).



DEMON

I am I am

My lady suffocates her own heads
While time
Bifurcates her at the neck.

Me?

I am; I am
In cartesian splendor
In gold
In brown
In Black
In heat.

Soft hands arm the strangler,
Steady is the hand of the Axe-man
Sweet are the caresses of the lover, and
Tender is the neck of the poor,
Black,
She,

While her name rests on my lips,
Fumbles and flips in my bladed hand,
She gingerly kisses the adze tips of my claws. I rake them through her gums. I tearing out precious things,
Gems scraped and tarnished now,
Delicious things

When chewed just right
The bolus looks like “we”
Yet smarts of shit and
Tastes like triumph.

A battle won on the ashes of burnt paper rings
With the bezel set “I Owe You”s glowing in the wreckage.

-S.P.



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